A

KEY, &c.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

1786

2 Great Britain - Lords & Commons

A

KEY

TO THE

Parliamentary Debates;

BEING AN

HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO RENDER THEM

INTELLIGIBLE.

LONDON:
Printed for J. DEBRETT, oppoſite BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

GR III
BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THE diſcuſſion of political topics is of all amuſements the moſt congenial to the minds of Engliſhmen; and the inhabitants of this metropolis, and their fellow ſubjects in the country, agree in ranking the parliamentary debates among the firſt luxuries, if not among the neceſſaries of life. *Panis et Cerealia*, Porter and news-papers, are as requi-

ſite to the Engliſh as to the Roman citizen.

But it has been hinted to the Editor by his provincial friends, that although the *pleaſure* they have always received from peruſing theſe diurnal documents continues undiminiſhed, they are apprehenſive that they draw leſs improvement from them than heretofore, and ſuſpect that this may ariſe from the uſe of a PARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE which is perfectly unintelligible to country underſtandings.

This

This grievance demands an immediate remedy, not only becauſe it is oppreſſive to our countrymen, but becauſe the people might eaſily be ſo far miſled, as in many caſes to draw wrong concluſions from certain premiſes, and to receive impreſſions of jealouſy from thoſe very arguments which were intended for their comfort and ſatisfaction. For this reaſon I have ſketched out this Parliamentary Vocabulary, which I hope to ſee gradually compleated by my friends in the ſenate, whoſe communications I

ſhall at all times moſt thankfully acknowledge.

It has been my wiſh to render this treatiſe not only a perfect and complete logographical repertory, but alſo a correct political creed, and young ſtateſman's vade mecum; and I flatter myſelf I have ſucceeded.

In the compilation of my work I have endeavoured to be impartial; but, in theſe times of party, who is free from contagion? I have endeavoured to ſuit the capacity

pacity of every reader; but I muſt expect that ſome explanations will appear too obvious, and others too refined. To ſilence, as much as poſſible, the faſtidiouſneſs of criticiſm, I think it neceſſary to declare, like Lord Kaimes, for what claſs of readers this treatiſe is intended. It is not for men of buſineſs,—they are above it; nor for the Lords of the Treaſury,—they are below it: but it is for thoſe, who, wiſhing well to the proſperity of this country, are deſirous of examining every public meaſure, of detecting every artful

ful attack on prerogative, and of being themſelves the guardians of their own happineſs.

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A KEY

A KEY, &c.

AMERICAN WAR.

THIS expreſſion was formerly uſed for a real event, but it has now loſt all meaning, and is to be claſſed among thoſe *ejaculatory expletives* which are nearly equivalent to G—d d--mn me!

It expreſſes anger, or contempt, as it is coupled with the epithets, *curſed*, *diabolical*, *abſurd*, *ridiculous*, &c.

It is uſual to ſay it, when there is nothing elſe to ſay. It has a peculiar beauty when abruptly introduced, as on

the buſineſs of the Weſtminſter election, a road-bill, &c. particularly when the Speaker hitches it into a parentheſis, or glides over it in a digreſſion.

It ſhould be employed *only* againſt Lord North. It does not apply to Meſſ. Jenkinſon, Robinſon, Dundas, &c. who conſtantly voted for and ſupported, or even to the Cabinet who conducted the war. The reaſon of this is obvious.

Without entering into the *principle* of the war, viz. the relieving this country from a part of its burthens, a principle for which Lord North was a conſtant advocate, it is eaſy to prove by the records of the time, that nothing leſs than *his* eloquence, and the univerſal opinion of his probity, could have given any man the unbounded command over the purſes of the nation which he certainly poſſeſſed. Now as money is admitted to be

be the ſinew of war, and the firſt requiſite in all military operations, and as Lord North alone did or could procure the money which fed the many campaigns in America, it follows that he was the only efficient agent in the buſineſs, and is ſingly chargeable with every calamity that befel us from the loſs of the teas in Boſton Bay, to the great hurricane in the Weſt-Indies.

ARISTOCRACY.

We are generally told, that this means "a government of Nobles," but it is no ſuch thing. For if this definition was admitted, it would follow, that the Lords being in this country the "*here-*"*ditary* repreſentatives of the people," our government is *ariſtocratic*.---And it would likewiſe follow, that the preſent young miniſter having eſtabliſhed this doctrine, he is a friend to ariſtocracy---

and ſuppoſition that is manifeſtly abſurd.

An Ariſtocracy means at preſent a Houſe of Commons, who refuſe to place any confidence in his Majeſty's confidential ſervants.

BEGGARLY.

An epithet applied to the late Adminiſtration and their friends, viz. the Dukes of Portland, Devonſhire, and Bedford, Lord Fitzwilliam, &c. &c. &c.

CHICKEN, GOSLIN, &c.

Mr. Pitt being fond of good eating, it is uſual for his friends to diſtinguiſh themſelves by theſe and other ſimilar appellatives.

COALITION.

COALITION.

We learn from a book of high authority (the Arabian Nights Entertainments) that there are certain magical words, which, properly pronounced and accented, produce an inſtantaneous effect on the whole face of nature, throwing the elements into confuſion, obſcuring the light of the ſun, and *changing men into beaſts.*

The word COALITION is of this nature. Although from the firſt moment of its adoption into our language till the year 1783, it had always been thought to be as harmleſs and inoffenſive a polyſyllable as any in the dictionary, it *then* became impregnated with an influence ſo malignant and peſtilential, that the ſudden *utterance* of this word expoſed a man to be knocked down by his beſt friend, the *publication* of it threw the whole

whole nation into convulſions of rage, and ſeveral members of the Houſe of Commons, againſt whoſe ears it had been too frequently directed, entirely loſt their former ſhape and appearance, and, to the aſtoniſhment of the world, were actually metamorphoſed into RATS.

To prove that ſome peculiar and occult quality inherent in the *word*, and perfectly independant of its meaning, is the real cauſe of theſe phenomena; let us examine the only plauſible reaſoning that has been adduced with a view to explain them on other principles. It is ſaid that "Lord North and Mr. Fox having thought fit to take different ſides on a popular queſtion, and having for many years continued their conteſt to the great delight and entertainment of the public, had no manner of *right* to terminate their animoſity without

without the conſent of the ſpectators; that indeed, if this principle was once admitted, a pair of gladiators might equally plead, that having voluntarily entered on the ſtage, they were entitled to retire whenever *they thought* they had received a competent number of wounds and bruiſes—and that therefore, to prevent the future aſſertion of ſuch unjuſt claims, the people had very properly expreſſed their early and violent indignation."

This argument is ſpecious, but no argument can explain ſuper-natural events. Common madneſs has its moments of calm: Lord M——n has paroxyſms of reaſon: but ſince the firſt utterance of that magical word *Coalition*, the nation has never experienced a lucid interval.

How

How different are the effects of that gentle word *Union*. Mr. Pitt unites with Mr. Dundas—nay even with Mr. Atkinſon—and every thing is as it ſhould be.

COMMUTATION.

An old operation of finance, wiſely revived by the preſent triumvirate.

In antient times it was uſual to commute military and other ſervices for a certain regular tax, leſs burthenſome to the ſubject, and more beneficial to the crown, and by degrees all the king's rights and duties have been *commuted* for taxes impoſed by parliament.

Taxes have generally been thrown on the conſumer, and the conſumer of luxuries has been charged the higheſt. Upon this principle, *Tea* was loaded with

with a heavy duty: but this is abſurd. Diſcontented or ill-natured people may refuſe to drink tea, and the honourable Eaſt India Company may ſuffer by ſuch caprice. If any tea ſhould be ſmuggled, the honourable company will be ſtill greater loſers. This therefore is the worſt of all taxes.

Thoſe who look out of window, ought to ſuffer for their idleneſs: therefore a tax was laid on windows. It is true, that thoſe who have a great deal to do, and never look out of window muſt pay likewiſe; but this makes the impoſt more productive. Therefore the window tax is the beſt of all taxes, and the moſt proper to be commuted for the other.

THE COURT.

I am forced to confeſs, that this expreſſion, is not always quite intelligible

even to myſelf, and that in reading the debates, I cannot always diſcover whether it alludes to the Court at St. James's, or the Court of Directors of the Honourable Eaſt India Company.

Generally ſpeaking, I believe all *orders* are ſuppoſed to proceed from the latter, except ſuch as relate to *Court-mournings*, and public ſpectacles, viz. plays, operas, riots, elections, &c. &c. &c.

DESPERADOES.

Myrmidons, rogues, villains, &c. *Synonima* for WHIGS.

FACTION.

From *factious*, which is the ſame as *factitious*. A love of liberty is never born with us, but *compoſed* out of certain perverſe principles, whereas loyalty

is

is inherent in our ſouls, the only *natural* government being a monarchy.

FRIENDS.

Nearly obſolete, excepting in the term "King's friends," which I ſuppoſe comprehends all the wiſe and good men in the nation.

INDIA.

A country ſuppoſed to lie in that part of Aſia which contains the eaſtern coaſt of Africa. If this definition is not conſiſtent with geography, it is at leaſt authorized by the act of parliament on which the Honourable Eaſt-India Company's charters is founded.*

* Vide Mr. Bolts, who reprobates the ſupineneſs of the Company's ſervants in neglecting ſo long the great country of Monomotapa.

The provinces uſually comprehended under the name of India, have been ſubject to a variety of revolutions;† but, fortunately for humanity, the Honourable Eaſt-India Company are now *protectors* of the greateſt part of the country, nearly in the ſame manner as Oliver Cromwell was *protector* of theſe kingdoms: that is, they receive the revenues, and cut off the kings heads whenever it is neceſſary.

The Mogul, Nabobs, Rajahs, &c. &c. are certain Mahometans, inveſted with theſe, and other hard names, by the Eaſt India Company. They are called the *Country Powers*, becauſe they have the *power* of executing whatever orders they may receive from the Governor General, or other the repreſentatives of the Court of Directors in India.

† Vide Salmon's Grammar.

This country is ſo uncommonly circumſtanced, that after experiencing a famine, which ſwept off a third of its inhabitants, it arrived in the ſpace of *eleven* years to an extent of population much beyond what had ever been known.

At this time, the Honourable Eaſt-India Company became inſolvent, and divided, *and were entitled to divide* eight *per cent.* on their capital.

Theſe two facts, of which the former is extremely improbable, and the latter morally impoſſible, are both true. I aſſert the one on the authority of Major John Scott, * and the other on that of our preſent miniſter.

INDIA

* "I am convinced that country (Bengal) has *very conſiderably* increaſed in population and manufactures

INDIA COMMITTEE.

A committe of the late Houſe of Commons appointed to enquire into the abuſes ſuppoſed to have been committed in India by the ſervants of the Honourble Eaſt-India Company. They executed their truſt with great labour; the vaſt maſs of reports drawn up by Mr. Dundas, were reſorted to as to an irrefragable body of evidence; but have been ſince declared by the greateſt of all law authorities, to be of no more validity in point of evidence, than the adventures of

tures from the year 1767 to 1781, although a famine in 1770 ſwept away a third of its inhabitants." (Major John Scott's narrative, preface to the ſecond edition, printed for J. Debrett) This is indeed a period of *fourteen* years; but I ſuppoſe we are to date from the famine, which reduces it to *eleven*, or perhaps to *ten*; for it is not clear *that the year* 1771, *ever exiſted in India*. Major John Scott ſays, that "Mr. "Haſtings was appointed in April 1772, *immediately* "after the great famine."

Robinſon

Robinſon Cruſoe; and to this opinion Mr. Dundas himſelf ſeems to have acceded.

INDIAN HABITS and CUSTOMS.

From theſe alone, and not from the romance above-mentioned, we are to look for real inſtruction. At leaſt this is the opinion of Major John Scott.

It is well known that the Hindoos feed ſolely on rice, which is generally farmed by the Company's ſervants. It ſeems probable, that by means of this traffic, ſeveral of the natives have occaſionally been ſtarved, the gentlemen from whom they were to purchaſe their food, having *miſcalculated* the ſum they were able to pay. I am told Mr. Dundas diſapproves of *this* mode of ſtarvation, and Major John Scott thinks it a bad *habit*, therefore it probably is ſo.

It is *cuſtomary* to make treaties of peace with the independant princes of Aſia when we mean to invade their country, as this meaſure takes off their attention from our military operations. Hence it was, that Mr. Haſtings made a treaty with the Mahrattaes before he attacked them. This Aſiatic *cuſtom* is very neceſſary to be known, as the ſelect Committee fell into numberleſs miſtakes from want of proper information concerning it.

It is cuſtomary to declare that the Engliſh are invincible. Should we happen to be beaten, to enter into a ſolemn engagement with the enemy, and to deliver hoſtages for the performance of the articles, ſuch a treaty being contrary to *cuſtom*, muſt be diſavowed. This accounts for the conduct of the preſidency of Bombay in their war with the Mahrattaes.

The

The government of Aſia being deſpotic, no attention to law, equity, &c. &c. can poſſibly be *cuſtomary*.

It may be occaſionally *expedient* to deſtroy the inhabitants of a country; but this is only done from a principle of generoſity to ſome ally, and in conſideration of forty lacks of rupees. Major John Scott ſays, it is by no means *cuſtomary*. For this reaſon, and becauſe it does not appear to him to be in any ſhape detrimental to population, I ſhould not have mentioned it, but for the abſurd prejudices entertained by ſome perſons with reſpect to the buſineſs of the Rohillas.

INDIA BILLS.

The firſt of theſe was Mr. Fox's bill. It was a very bad bill, becauſe Major John Scott thought ſo, and becauſe it

was founded on the fanciful reports of the Houſe of Commons.

That great abuſes prevailed in India, was admitted: That the Directors were too impotent to correct them, was acknowledged: This bill, therefore, veſted a coercive power in *ſeven perſons, for a term of years*, and thereby *apparently* rendered theſe ſeven perſons *independent* of the Crown, the Miniſter, and the Company. Fortunately, a few worthy members of the late abandoned Houſe of Commons, diſcovered the miſchief with which this meaſure was pregnant. Mr. Dundas, Mr. Robinſon, and their friends, caught the alarm. Inſtructed by their own feelings, they were convinced, that *gratitude* was a ſtill ſtronger motive to attachment than the moſt intire dependence; they felt the *impoſſibility* of abandoning a diſgraced Miniſter; they ſaw their *idol* LIBERTY in danger; they even

even trembled for PREROGATIVE. Mr. Dundas ſounded to arms, and, ſo powerful is virtue when graced by ſuch eloquence, that the whole nation was inſtantly excited againſt the obnoxious bill: Every borough teemed with addreſſes; the very walls of Parliament, and even the mutes of the Court, ſeemed to open their *poor, poor, dumb mouths*, in defence of prerogative, and to receive ſenſe and motion from the eloquence of the new Amphion. The Miniſter and his bill were driven out together.

Under more fortunate auſpices, a ſecond India bill was propoſed by Mr. Pitt. *He* wiſhed that India had a ſtronger government, he felt the impotence of the Directors, but he inſiſted that they had a *chartered right* to their impotence, and therefore left it to them. In return he only deſired them to give up the chartered rights of the *Proprietors*, which was readily aſſented to,—and to divide

their patronage with the Privy-Council, —to which they alſo ſubmitted.

This generoſity and ſelf-denial ſoon met with a proper recompence. Every one felt, with Mr. Atkinſon, that the *beſt* mode to be adopted for the *better* government of India, was, to leave matters as nearly as poſſible on the old footing. And thus was formed a perfect India bill.

THE MINISTRY.

In this town we underſtand by the word Miniſtry, that pure, holy, and glorious triumvirate, compoſed of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and Mr. Atkinſon; whereas my country friends ſeem to believe (on the faith of a certain whimſical publication, entitled, "The †

† Vide Court Kalendar, printed for Debrett.

"Court

" Court Kalendar,") that a number of perſons mentioned in that performance under the title of Secretaries of State, &c. &c. are truly and efficiently concerned in the government of this country.

PRIVILEGES of PARLIAMENT.

Theſe have been within a few years very conſiderably diminiſhed, and ſeem at preſent to be reduced to two. 1ſt. The privilege of franking letters, and, 2dly, the privilege of ſleeping in the Houſe whenever Lord M——ve ſpeaks. The latter privilege is ſometimes *uſurped* by the ſtrangers in the gallery.

PROLIXITY.

This is an old word, but has always been miſunderſtood. A *prolix ſpeaker* is one who pertinaciouſly adheres to the

ſubject

ſubject of debate, without enlivening his diſcourſe with egotiſm or invectives. Such a ſpeaker is neceſſarily very tedious and diſguſting.

Cloſe reaſoning is the very reverſe of this. A *cloſe reaſoner* (as appears from the etymology, is one who is very *cloſe* or *avaritious* of reaſon, and ſeldom imparts any to his audience. In the preſent Miniſter this quality appears to be the effect of ſtudy: in the Lords of the Treaſury it is the gift of nature.

PREROGATIVE.

Is a parliamentary expreſſion, which has of late years fallen into diſuſe, and ſounds at preſent a little antiquated. But like ſeveral other antiquated words it is peculiarly appropriate and forcible. Having been indiſcriminately employed upon every occaſion, it was once in danger

ger of having no import at all; but after lying by for a few years, we may preſume that it has recovered its luſtre, like the public ſpirit of a Gower or a Camden.

According to the precept of Horace, Mr. Pitt, that great arbiter of men and words:

" Proferet in lucem, ſpetioſa vocabula
" rerum,
" Quæ priſcis memorata Catonibus
" atque Cethegis,
" Nunc ſitis informis premit et de-
" ſerta vetuſtas."

He muſt feel it more becoming his principles to reſort to the bold and vigorous expreſſions of the Stuarts and the Tudors. It is inconceivable to what ſhifts our public ſpeakers have been driven to avoid a kind of grating inharmonious

inharmonious ſound, and a certain prejudice which they erroneouſly conceive attached to that ſame word Prerogative. You may hear them beating about the buſh for an hour together, and puzzling themſelves and their auditors with an hundred involved, unintelligible phraſes about the independence of every branch of the legiſlature. The equipoiſed balance of the conſtitution, and an hundred other circumlocution which do not expreſs their meaning with half ſo much truth and clearneſs.

I do not believe there is a word in the Engliſh language capable of more extenſive uſe in debate. For inſtance, if a Miniſter ſhould be accuſed of ceding our foreign poſſeſſions in an inglorious and unequal peace, of ſquandering the public treaſures in bribing Scotchmen and lawyers into the acceptance of our firſt offices in profit and conſequence, of corruption

corruption or imbecility in the adminiſtration of affairs, or in ſhort of every act of public or private oppreſſion—It will be ſufficient for the Miniſter to entertain the Houſe with a copious and ſplendid diſſertation on prerogative. What a ſatisfaction it will be to a Houſe of Commons to be relieved from ſo many tedious diſcuſſions upon practice, wiſdom, expediency, &c. matters very little intereſting to the generality of that aſſembly. The word prerogative, like the word Bore, may be applied to every impreſſion of the mind. But it will be of ſo much more uſe, as the latter ſerves only to expreſs impatience at the nonſenſe of others, whereas this will ſerve a miniſter to make his own endured.

It is therefore recommended to Mr. Pitt, as becoming his generous and manly character, to give things their

true names. He may do it without endangering his rhetorical character, as he has given ſufficient inſtances of his ability in the multiplication of phraſes, in the variation of expreſſions, and the involution of ſentences, &c. &c.

PREVIOUS QUESTION.

This is parliamentary device for avoiding a direct anſwer on any topic that a Miniſter cannot, or will not argue upon.—" Anſwer me this queſtion," ſays Oppoſition ! — " No : — Let the Houſe determine whether this is the time to give the anſwer."

The ſame ſort of policy that led Fabius to decline a pitched battle, inclines Mr. Pitt to rely on the prevailing efficacy of a previous queſtion. While the enemy are eager to try the juſtice of their cauſe, in a fair open engagement, it is wonder-

wonderfully prudent to ſtay quietly intrenched on the eminences and high ſtations of the Treaſury Bench. "Fight us fairly and handſomely," cry the hardy champions of popularity, "let fact, let ſenſe, let truth decide the day." —"No!—we are not quite ready juſt now (ſay the cautious miniſterialiſts) we have a flying camp of adjournments, ---we'll intercept your convoys of papers,---we'll cut off your ſupplies of documents,---we'll ſkirmiſh with you in election committees, pick up your ſtragglers, and harraſs you by force of numbers.---But our troops are raw, and our recruits undiſciplined.---No main points of argument muſt be ventured.---Previous queſtions are infinitely ſafer.

What a ſummary of all political wiſdom is contained in this compendious rhetoric! How dexterous and convenient a ſyſtem to ſcreen imbecility and

impotence! It is a perilous adventure to mix with characters who can think, ſpeak, and act for themſelves. Few gentlemen approve of ſo fatiguing a connection. On the contrary, it is perfectly pleaſurable to ſupport a Miniſter who will ſit you a whole day without adducing a ſingle argument as to the *right* of any queſtion, but reſolutely defend the policy of not diſcovering the motives, principles, or common ſenſe of his meaſures. And really there is a greater portion of natural liberty ſecured for members of parliament in this way than in the other. Wherefore ſhould an independent ſenator be compelled to give any reaſon for what he does? No Engliſhman is conſtitutionally bound to anſwer interrogatories. Even in the courſe of common evidence, it would refine and poliſh our courts of juſtice not a little, if a witneſs might at any time put the *previous queſtion* on the buſy queries

queries of an officious advocate. Every one knows that the *peine forte & dure* has been utterly abolished within these few years. And yet what was that but a compulsary attack on the *previous question*, which the culprit judiciously maintained to be his natural right?

But to prove more incontestibly the infinite inconvenience of entering into direct arguments on public matters, only try how irksome it must prove to a minister to account for his conduct even to a *private querist*. Suppose an impolite enquirer should ask Mr. Pitt what was the secret cause of his supporting the Westminster scrutiny? Could any one think it fair, or reasonable, that he should give a direct answer by owning it was in mere obedience to the capricious malice of the greatest hypocrite in the kingdom? Surely it is at once more eligible and safe to move the *previous question*,

queſtion, or, in parliamentary jargon, to gravely ſay, "I am not ripe to commit myſelf in anſwering that point at preſent. So, if ſome reverend ſtateſman Mr. Wyvill for example, ſhould peremptorily inſiſt on knowing the real motive for ſacrificing our laſt remnant of commercial conſequence to the Iriſh; which would it be beſt to ſay, "The truth is, I *muſt* give them *that*, or a parliamentary reform, and I have it in orders to abandon any thing rather than parliamentary influence,"---or, "I don't chuſe to anſwer you, good Mr. Wyvill, I am not ripe to commit myſelf on that point as yet." If a generous unſuſpecting character ſhould enquire on what motives Mr. Pitt had excluded Lord Shelburne from all ſhare of power, ſurely it would be raſh in the extreme to own the real cauſe! Lord Shelburne himſelf would undoubtedly adopt the previous queſtion on a ſimilar ſubject.

A Miniſter trained and educated in that ſchool, can only do honour to his maſter by his *argument*, and by his *conduct*, when he drives him from all ſhare of public employment.

RECIPROCITY.

This word has of late been frequently employed with ſingular grace and propriety. It muſt be obſerved, however, that this propriety does not ariſe from the force of any idea that the word either conveys, or is intended to convey, but from the ſingle circumſtance of its containing five ſyllables. The truth of this obſervation my be very eaſily proved.

For when we ſay, " The laſt treaty " of peace was formed on the ground " of perfect reciprocity," we do not mean to aſſert, that the conceſſions were equal

equal on both ſides, but only that our enemies *agreed* to accept what we *agreed* to give up. In the ſame manner, while Mr. Ord and Mr. Pitt join in aſſuring us, that the Iriſh commercial regulations are formed on the ground of reciprocity, they differ entirely with reſpect to the conceſſions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer aſſerting, that they are *all* made by Ireland, and his repreſentative in Ireland inſiſting as ſtrenuouſly, that *every thing* is given up by *us*. Now, as it was obſerved in the Houſe of Commons, that, *in either caſe*, "the re-"ciprocity would be all on one ſide," it follows, that the phraſe means no more than that the *agreement* above-mentioned is reciprocal; and as *every* agreement is ſo, it is clear that the word reciprocity has no meaning at all.

This, however, is no objection to its uſe. It has already been obſerved, that the

the phraſe "American war," is exactly in the ſame predicament, as well as the words, candour, virtue, conſiſtency, &c. which are perfectly parliamentary, and employed every day with ſucceſs. The truth is, that men, and particularly members of parliament, are *convinced*, not by *argument*, but by *harmony*, and an attentive inſpection of Mr. Pitt's ſpeeches will convince us, that if no man of his age is equally perſuaſive, it is not becauſe no other man poſſeſſes an equal ſhare of knowledge, but becauſe no man is ſo well verſed in proſody and ſyntax. A circumſtance which proves how much the fate of empires depends on the goodneſs of grammar ſchools.

REFORM OF PARLIAMENT.

The Houſe of *Peers* is now perfect, becauſe it is numerous. The Lords are by birth the counſellors of his Majeſty's

and as we are expreſsly taught, that "in *a* MULTITUDE *of counſellors there* "*is wiſdom*," it is obvious that they ought to reſemble a *multitude* as much as poſſible.

The only point to be attended to in the creation of new peers is, that the King is the fountain of honour, and *his* favour, the great merit of a public character. No title, therefore, ought to be granted from any other conſideration.

The Houſe of Commons ſtill continues imperfect, and we are ignorant of the *ſpecific propoſal* * intended for its reform: but it is poſſible, by conſidering the diſorder, to gueſs at the mode of cure. Let us enumerate the morbid ſymptoms.

* Specific propoſal; a propoſal acting as ſpecific: a ſpecific is a medicine that acts unaccountably.

1. Many

1. Many boroughs that return members to Parliament are in the poſſeſſion of private perſons. Theſe perſons may become *factious*, therefore, ſuch boroughs ought to be purchaſed by the public, and veſted in the crown.

2. Many boroughs not in the *poſſeſſion* of individuals, are yet under private influence. All the voters of theſe boroughs to be named by the crown, and their franchiſes to laſt "quamdiu bene "ſe geſſerint."

3. Elections for *boroughs*, are not ſufficiently expenſive. The number of country-members ought to be greatly increaſed, in order to circulate more money in the country.

4. The Houſe of Commons ought to be rendered ſubordinate to the Houſe of Peers; the latter to be declared by a ſolemn

lemn act of the legiſlature, "the heriditary repreſentatives of the people.

Theſe few alterations will render the Houſe of Commons an uſeful part of the government.

SECRET INFLUENCE.

This pretended *influence* never exiſted, does not exiſt, and never can have an exiſtence; for, it is eſtabliſhed by *law*, that the King can do no wrong; and it is evident to *common ſenſe*, that no *other* perſon can have the ſame privilege. Now, if the king was under ſecret influence, he would be ſubject to error; that is, he would loſe his very eſſence, which is impoſſible.

What

What is *called* ſecret influence, is only a *communication of ſecret hints*, a very neceſſary communication to every prince of this country. It is true, he has many and great ſources of information, which no doubt contribute much to his infallibility. His *miniſterial* conferences, teach him the politics of Europe, the reſources of his colonies, and the general ſtate of Newgate. Levee and drawing-room converſations, furniſh him with metreology, medicine, and chronology, teaching him the temperature of the air, the nature of influenzas, and enabling him to date with accuracy the births, deaths, and marriages that happen in the metropolis. The daily papers ſhew all that paſſes in what is jocoſely called the great council of the nation. But the great knowledge of all, the knowledge of men and miniſters, cannot proceed from theſe ſour-

ces

ces; it muſt ſolely ariſe from ſecret, confidential intelligence. *

SERVANTS OF THE COMPANY.

This expreſſion is peculiarly proper. The perſons it is meant to deſcribe are certain gentlemen, who, like other gentlemens gentlemen, ſuppoſe that it is the duty of a ſervant to mind his own buſineſs before that of his maſter.

The Popes, while they called themſelves the ſlaves of ſlaves, were in fact the kings of kings. In the ſame manner the princes of Aſia owe their exiſtence to the caprice of theſe ſervants of the Company. But this is perfectly

* If the reports circulated concerning the ſecret advice of L—d T———, (the new L—d B——m) were true, they would only prove that a great man's ears are always open to the *meaneſt* of his ſubjects.

right,

right, and tends to the improvement of agriculture, as is fully ſhewn by Major J—n S——tt.

STARVATION.

This word, which was long attached as an honourable *agnomen* to Mr. Dundas, like the title of Africanus to Scipio, ſeems to be falling into diſuſe.

It does not mean (as my country readers might perhaps imagine) that Mr. Dundas is in any danger of being ſtarved, for although his ſervices have not received an *adequate* recompence, the receipt of about £.3000 from government places him at leaſt out of the reach of want.

Neither is it ſynonymous with *famine*; for Mr. Dundas moſt certainly did not intend to produce a famine in America,

America, which is the granary of the Weſt Indies, and of a great part of Europe.

The word Starvation was intended by Mr. Dundas to expreſs a ſcheme of his own, by which he meant to prevent the Americans from eating, when they were hungry, and had food within their reach, thereby inſuring their reduction without bloodſhed.

WESEMINSTER ELECTION.

A metaphyſical term, expreſſive of a non-entity; no member being yet elected for Weſtminſter.

The difficulty that has hitherto prevented any repreſentation for Weſtminſter is, briefly this. On ſumming up the poll-books, a majority appeared in favour of Mr. Fox, inſtead of Sir Cecil Wray,

Wray, who certainly ought to have been choſen, ſo that the High-Bailiff did not know how to proceed, although it is certain that the High-Bailiff is a man of uncommon penetration.

He could not return Sir Cecil, for the majority was againſt him: Nor could he declare it a void election, for all the forms of election had been preſerved: Nor could he return Lord Hood ſingly, becauſe he was directed by his writ to return two members, and becauſe Lord Hood's claim ſtood on the ſame ground as Mr. Fox's, namely, a majority of votes; nor could he return Mr. Fox, for ſuch a return would have been a direct affront to ———.

The High Bailiff is a very conſcientious man. He granted a ſcrutiny to ſatisfy his conſcience, and then to ſa-

 tisfy,

tisfy Parliament he gave them his conſcience in pawn : The whole wiſdom of Parliament has been exerted to reconcile the High Bailiff's conſcience with common ſenſe ; they have now returned it to him in deſpair : And ſo the matter reſts.*

IRELAND.

A melancholy fatality ſeems to have attended this unfortunate country from the earlieſt period of its hiſtory. Subdued by the Engliſh while the Engliſh were yet barbarous, plundered becauſe plunder was then the object of conqueſt,

* The reader will perceive that this was written before the late puſillanimous vote was paſſed in the Houſe of Commons, abandoning the intereſts of Sir Cecil Wray, the High Bailiff and his conſcience. and of the many worthy mariners and ſoldiers who had exerted both their voices and tneir arms in defence of the freedom of election.

involve

involved in every revolution that affected this country, and the victims of them all, the Iriſh, during a long ſeries of reigns, ſaw their miſeries rather diverſified than relieved, and even in this Auguſtan age ſeem only to have been noticed as the moſt patient objects of miniſterial rapacity. At length, however, they ſeized the proper moment of of expoſtulation. They obtained from Lord North the repeal of all the unjuſt and cruel acts that had hitherto fettered their commerce and repreſſed their induſtry. The ſubſequent adminiſtration gave them a legiſlature as independent as the general welfare of the empire would permit. Nothing remained to be wiſhed for, but a ſecurity for the permanency of theſe bleſſings: A fair and equal repreſentation of the people.

In making this requeſt they thought themſelves ſure of ſucceſs. Mr. Pitt was the avowed champion of parliamentary reform. He had diſmiſſed the late profligate Houſe of Commons, and had aſſembled another perfectly unlike the laſt, and indeed perfectly unlike any that this country ever ſaw. England, the parent of poetry, of eloquence, and of the arts, of a Whitehead, a Pitt, and a Pinchbeck, had obtained that moſt invaluable of all bleſſings, a virtuous, pacific, and ſtable government; a government that is the wonder of Europe, the the terror of ſmugglers, the idol of the Honourable Eaſt-India Company, of Major John Scott, and of the High-Bailiff of Weſtminſter.

What may be the final determination of Mr. Pitt in this matter is not yet known; but in the mean time his repreſentative, Mr. Orde, has promiſed the

the Iriſh Houſe of Commons to grant, not what they wanted, or what they aſked; but what they had before, and conſequently did not aſk. In return, the Iriſh grant what does not belong to *them*, but to the Crown, and they grant it, not to the Crown or its heirs, but to themſelves; and this grant, which forms the laſt of eleven reſolutions, is (as we are told) a preliminary to the firſt. And theſe reſolutions form a ſyſtem which is to be fixed and permanent, and it is to be changed in each country as often as it ſhall be altered in the other. And Mr. Orde ſays, that this ſyſtem will render Ireland the emporium of the World, and Mr. Pitt ſays it will do no ſuch thing, and Mr. Orde ſeems to miſunderſtand Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Pitt ſeems to miſunderſtand Mr. Orde, and they both ſeem to miſunderſtand the requeſt of Ireland, and Ireland cannot underſtand either the one or the other, and

Eng-

England is not at all wiſer. The Throne has received from Ireland an addreſs of thanks for what has been done, though it is not yet done, and perhaps never will be done. But the buſineſs is now before Parliament, and they will deeide on it in ſuch manner as to their wiſdom ſhall ſeem meet.

FINIS.

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